

## Key Driver Analysis

Knowing where to focus limited resources to improve residents' opinions of local government requires information that targets the services that are most important to residents. However, when residents are asked what services are most important, they rarely stray beyond core services – those directed to save lives and improve safety.

In market research, identifying the most important characteristics of a transaction or product is called key driver analysis. These key drivers do not come from asking customers to self-report which service or product characteristic most influenced their decision to buy or return, but rather from statistical analyses of the actual predictors of their behavior. When customers are asked to name the most important characteristics of a good or service, responses often are expected or misleading – just as they can be in the context of a citizen survey. For example, air travelers often claim that safety is a primary consideration in their choice of an airline, yet key driver analysis will reveal that the quality of food or on flight entertainment predict their actual buying decisions.

In local government, core services – like fire protection – invariably land at the top of the list when residents are asked about the most important City services. By using key driver analysis, our approach digs deeper to identify the less salient, but more influential services that are most related to residents' ratings of overall quality of local government services. This analysis focuses service improvement efforts on those services (key drivers) that most influence residents' perceptions about overall city service quality. Those services may actually drive ratings of overall service quality, which residents connect closely to their overall quality of life in the community. By targeting improvements in key driver services, Edmond has an opportunity to see a domino effect that improves resident perceptions in general.

A key driver analysis (KDA) was conducted for the City of Edmond by examining the relationships between ratings of each service and ratings of Edmond's overall services. Those key driver services that correlated most highly with residents' perceptions about overall City service quality have been identified. By targeting improvements in key services, Edmond can focus on the services that have the greatest likelihood of influencing residents' opinions about overall service quality.

The 2008 City of Edmond Action Chart™ on the following page combines three dimensions of performance:

- Trendline data. The arrows next to service boxes point up (black arrow) or down (white arrow) to indicate differences from the previous survey.
- Comparison to the national benchmark. When a comparison is available, the background color of each service box indicates whether the service is above the norm (green), similar to the norm (yellow) or below the norm (red).
- Identification of key drivers. A black key icon next to a service box notes a key driver.

Fourteen services were including in the KDA for the City of Edmond. Seven of these services were identified as key drivers for the City: current traffic signals and signs, parks, recreational facilities, recycle bin collection, Edmond Electric, street maintenance and the *Edmond Life* newsletter. Each of the key drivers was above to the national benchmark, except for current traffic signals and timing which was

below the benchmark. *Edmond Life* newsletter was the only key driver to change over time, receiving a higher rating in 2008 than in 2006.

Considering all performance data included in the Action Chart, a jurisdiction typically will want to consider improvements to any key driver services that are trending down or that are not at least similar to the benchmark. In Edmond, current traffic signals and signs emerged as a service on which to focus attention and resources, as it is a key driver and below the national benchmark.

Services with a high percent of respondents answering "don't know" (i.e., more than 30%) were excluded from the analysis and were considered services that would be less influential.